although guests from other tribes are sometimes invited to be present at other ceremonials it is at ~~other than~~ potlatches, ~~but this is unusual~~. Since the validity of such transactions as marriages, divorces, or the assumption of professional prerogatives depends on the presence of witnesses, and since the importance of such a rite depends on the number of witnesses, it follows that a man is always eager to carry out any public performance at a potlatch when he is sure of the attention of foreigners, and the consequent wider diffusion of knowledge of what he has done. The man who has ~~called the~~ invited guests is usually willing ~~for~~ to allow others to perform at his potlatch, since it increases the complexity and importance of the affair. It follows that no two potlatches are alike; ~~at~~ one will contain features entirely lacking ~~from~~ in another. Moreover, the wealth of the donor determines how many rites he ~~himself~~ will ~~perform~~ cause to be performed. The fundamental concept of the potlatch is the inviting of guests from abroad to witness rites in connection with an ancestral myth, and especially the return of a recently deceased relative of the donor to visit ~~the~~ the living.

At any important potlatch the following rites are carried out, and in the following account of the ritual it will be assumed that these alone are taking place.

1. The return of a dead ancestor to visit the living.

2. The initiation of a number of young men or women into the sᵾsaok society. This includes the validation of a sᵾsaok name for each, and a period of seclusion in the back-room. The initiates may either be relatives of the donor of the potlatch, or young persons whose relatives are taking the opportunity ~~of the potlatch~~ to carry out the rite in the presence of foreigners. Some of the initiates may already be members of the society, undergoing a further period of seclusion in order to increase their status by a further distribution of presents.

3. The payment by the wife of the donor and her family of goods to "rebuy" her from her husband. This is a legal fiction, though necessary to maintain the status of the children.

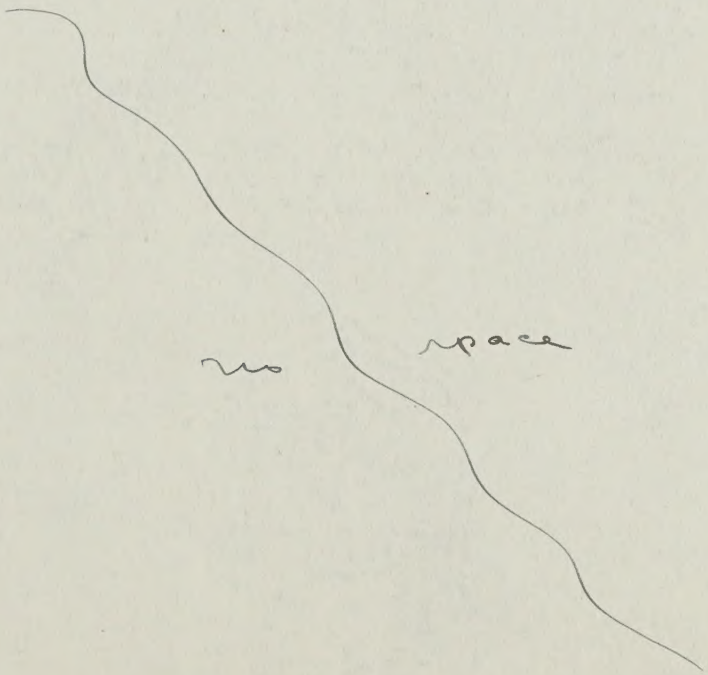
4. The strengthening of the donor's seat.

~~1939~~

5. The strengthening, or initial establishment, of seats for a number of young relatives of the donor who may, or may not, be those whom are being initiated into the *gɛ'gaok* society. Other youths may also be established on seats by their relatives.

If the reader bears this summary in mind ~~it is hoped he will not become~~ is less likely to be confused by ~~t hy~~ the complication of rites.

The length of time occupied by a potlatch varies according to the number of rites being performed. The preliminaries, including the beginning of seclusion for *gɛ'gaok* initiates, requires at least several ~~months~~ weeks, ~~and~~ sometimes months. There is further delay of a week or more after the arrival of the first guests as only when the last party has arrived can the actual potlatch begin. This can ~~be~~ then be completed in ~~two~~ three days and nights, although if many initiates are performing their *gɛ'gaok* dances, a longer time is required.



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~~3167~~

what its origin, is of little standing. As the Bella Coola say, few goods have been expended in making it "heavy" or "firm". Consequently, an ambitious man desires to increase the prestige of his name by giving presents at ceremonies, and particularly by giving potlatches.

What are the consequences of giving a potlatch ?

~~In the first place~~ The donor spreads the fame of his name far and wide, ~~and also~~ and the myth with which it is incorporated. Thus he increases the renown of his ancestors, a source of intense pride and gratification.

More important even than this, it elevates the donor, ~~himself~~. With the proper carrying out of the complicated ritual and the knowledge that his name is now known among different tribes a man ~~experiences a~~ feels a mental superiority which enables him to take a leading part in the affairs of his community. In Bella Coola a chief, ~~stältcmx~~ is a person whose influence is paramount owing to his success in giving potlatches.(1) ~~The advice of such a man is generally followed, though he has no judicial or executive authority. In fact, a chief's own feeling of mental superiority is accepted by the community.~~

If several chiefs in one village have given potlatches, he who has given most is generally ~~the person~~ of greatest importance, although often a man of forceful character who has held, for example, five potlatches will be regarded with greater respect than one of lesser weight, even if he has given six. ~~In theory, the man who bears the name of the first person to occupy a village, at the time the earth was settled, should be chief in that village. If he has been~~

(1). Hereafter in this monograph the word "chief" will be used with this significance alone. In Sk'sook songs the archaic word stätcmcnts is also sometimes employed for "chief."

~~5153~~

The whole system is exceedingly fluid, as might be expected where chieftainship depends on individual prowess. In theory, the man who holds the name of the first person to occupy a village, at the time the earth was ~~first~~ settled, ought to be chief of that village. If he has been able to give the necessary potlatches to weight his possession of that name, the fact that he is the legal descendant of the first chief will add a certain amount to his prestige, but unless he has been able to do this his influence will be slight. ~~As the Bella Coola describe it :- The history of names from generation to generation is a series of curves; sometimes one may be on a pinnacle of glory, when its possessor has given many potlatches, while a few years later it may be in the dirt, then held by a poor man. Also, a name may lie dormant for many generations, the legal possession of a family, but never validated by the distribution of presents.~~

no space

~~The~~ A

~~able to hold the power by which to give weight to his possession of the name, the fact that he is legal descendant of the first [illegible] of-~~
~~ten a gain to his prestige, but unless he has [illegible] to use by influence~~
~~will be slight.~~

Thirdly, potlatches not only establish the status of a man in this world; they smooth the way for him after death. Before the corpse of a chief is removed from the house where he has died, a speaker always announces the number of potlatches he has given and the total value of goods distributed ~~at the grave.~~ at them. These gifts in a vague way are felt to make easy the deceased's path in the next world as they have done in the present. This feature of the potlatch, though firmly believed by some of the older people, plays a less important part in the life of the Bella Coola than might be expected.

What are the requisites for giving a potlatch ?

1. The possession of an ~~ancestral~~ ancient myth, containing a name or names. Probably every Bella Coola has this requisite. It is true that a man's family may not be the proud owners of one of the ancestral myths dealing with the first settlement of this earth, but if not they will at least own some ancient myth that they can elevate by the giving of a potlatch. As has been said, the owner of one of the most ancient names often chooses to elevate one of lesser antiquity, a course, which must, perforce, be done by one who lacks an origin myth.
~~possessor of one of the most dignified names, one of those given by the supreme god to [illegible] or~~
~~next dearest to this earth at the beginning of time, will prefer to give to his~~
~~[illegible] name. [illegible] is no place for pride, nor~~
~~exists [illegible] tribes.~~ The slight feeling of deference

[illegible] or [illegible] to hold the name of the first inhabitant of

what its origin, is of little standing. . As the Bella Coola say, few goods have been expended in making it "[illegible]."

~~Ulsa~~

the mighty chiefs of old
the earth, is subordinate to the very real feeling of respect in which is held the successful giver of potlatches. The descendant of one of the first people has the potential right to chieftainship, but unless he can give potlatches on a scale sufficient to gain that eminence.

2. An occasion for giving a potlatch is never lacking. It consists of a number of closely associated rites, any one of which will serve as a reason for the ceremony. The most important reason is the return of a dead ancestor. Or sometimes, to visit the living, ~~It is [illegible]~~ say that is available to any one of any rank.. The Bella Coola ~~also~~ the return of the dead as the "most important reason", but unquestionably it has a comforting effect on the mind of the donor of the potlatch.

3. Wealth. Without the necessary goods with which to make presents to the guests invited, no matter how important may be his ancestral rights and titles. Without wealth he may be able to amass by his own labours, he cannot be assisted by his wife's family it is virtually impossible for him to succeed. The Bella Coola say that a man cannot become a chief even with large potlatches made by a woman's family when they "relay" her from her husband. In other words, no man can succeed without the support of his wife's. In securing a wife a man is guided almost entirely by the ability of her family to give financial support. Sometimes an elderly couple assist a married couple to give a potlatch; this custom though considered quite proper, is not common.

4. Supernatural assistance. To the Bella Coola this is quite as important as the preceding. One may work very hard but his efforts are never crowned with success, whereas another man will prosper in every venture. This is due to

supernatural ~~elements~~ ~~attributes~~

Preliminaries ~~I~~ Small caps

and naval,

dul~~y~~ ratified, ~~has~~ ~~importance~~ ~~among~~ ~~the~~ ~~provisions~~ ~~which~~ ~~it~~ ~~contains~~ ~~pr~~ ~~has~~

~~I~~ For ~~many~~ of ~~your~~ ~~~~ the ~~personal~~. ~~Intoxicating~~ ~~prohibits~~ ~~him~~,

~~clothes~~, ~~tools~~, ~~agricultural~~ ~~implements~~, ~~bedding~~, ~~arms~~, ~~books~~, ~~medicines~~ ~~will~~,

~~clocks~~ ~~and~~ ~~other~~ ~~valuables~~. ~~It~~ ~~is~~ ~~impossible~~ ~~that~~ ~~a~~ ~~man~~ ~~can~~ ~~live~~ ~~without~~,

~~property~~, ~~and~~ ~~your~~ ~~child~~, ~~so~~ ~~to~~ ~~speak~~ ~~for~~ ~~their~~ ~~need~~. ~~I~~ ~~He~~ ~~can~~ ~~not~~ ~~live~~

~~but~~ ~~spiritual~~ ~~food~~, ~~and~~ ~~~~ ~~most~~ ~~important~~ ~~of~~ ~~all~~, ~~his~~ ~~Bible~~ ~~is~~ ~~easily~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~had~~.

~~I~~ Formerly, ~~the~~ ~~goat~~-~~skin~~ ~~blankets~~ ~~were~~ ~~highly~~ ~~valued~~, ~~being~~ ~~never~~ ~~dyed~~
for fear of the blood staining the wool. Instead, they were corrected by age, and
chosen to depth in needs. For ~~ornamental~~, each skin was laid out on the floor
and then cut into longitudinal strips, two, three, or four fingers wide.

~~[illegible]~~ (1)

a rival chief never gives

for

(1) Domo·ts, often referred to as the "breath" or "voice" of a chief. They are also called kopitota, the "heart" or "mind" of a chief.

Chapter IV

~~are also called wiexsis, i.e "heart" or the "froth" of a chief~~

his goods at his potlatch it will be announced how he has obtained them, and thus the lender is publicly proclaimed as a person of sufficient wealth to be able to spare some of it. Goods so loaned are termed "belt [illegible]", a reference to the manner in which a man fastens up his cape with a belt before setting to work. The assumption is that X. will have to labour to repay his indebtedness. Failure to do so is a serious crime, and the bonder would be just [illegible] security for repayment.

Men of business ability are always ready to lend goods to those who are planning potlatches or other rights, knowing that the investment is almost certainly safe and lucrative.

X. uses his own discretion as to how much wealth is necessary. If he knows how much he owes for presents he has himself received on previous occasions, he would not dream of giving a potlatch until able to repay these. Failure to do so would hold him up to the scornful derision of the whole community. But he acts upon his own judgment with regard to interest. If he continues to hold goods until he is able to repay with heavy interest he gains much wealth from his generous neighbours, but meanwhile he does not enjoy the distinction which would have followed a smaller affair at an earlier period. Moreover, owing to the uncertainty about how much his wife's family will contribute, though that can be estimated with a fair degree of accuracy, as in [illegible] every transaction is made publicly, so that each man knows the wealth of his relatives.

The favorite time for a potlatch is October, before the [illegible] dances, when there is abundance of food. At this season there is plenty of salmon roe, berries and crab-apples, all of which might be run[illegible] from.

~~1914~~

Occasionally, a potlatch takes place after the Russian period, [illegible] the only foods available are olachen grease, wolf meat, smoked fish, [illegible] look bark and dried berries. If several men in one village decide to give potlatches the same year there is often rivalry and dispute as to who shall be the first donor. There is no satisfactory method of settling this point.

When all is ready the herald is sent to summon the fellow-citizens and to bid the [illegible] to the feast. This ceremony can be carried out, but no social limitation is involved and a rich or worthless man may be asked.

The host remains in his own house, hearing that the guests shall be distributed. While the invited guests are beautifying themselves with a liberal application of paint, and by washing, X., [illegible] by his family and other assistants, is preparing large quantities of food, borrowing boxes and [illegible] other necessary arrangements. Presently the guests assemble; they enter in a crowd bearing on their heads one or more wooden vessels filled with food, and [illegible] in the society. Each takes the seat to which he is entitled, the chiefs round the fire, or on either side of it, the commoners, slaves and strangers, in the rear near the door. The herald moves to and fro between door and fire, [illegible] announcement of [illegible] to the general interest of the affair. If it is the intention of [illegible] to bestow dignity on chiefs by the name of their predecessors, but should one fail to live up to his position, the herald is [illegible] person's behavior. In many respects his position is [illegible] but as a herald always proclaims valuable presents, [illegible] accompanied [illegible] off, willing to undertake the [illegible] ordinary

[illegible]

[illegible]ation in return for [illegible] substantial gain.

[illegible] group of young lads, friends or relatives of Y., disrobing the lord. It is placed in water; an important chief being called upon to share his box with no one, or more six or seven men of no standing may partake from the box. These receptacles, with whatever food-grains in them, are taken home by the guests; moreover the host would be insulted. Lords frequently are host in this way, [illegible] substantial gain. After the first course, a second follows, consisting of a different kind of food in another box, and another [illegible] is served, and a fourth course. [illegible] never ending story. The more he eats, the more [illegible] he consumes. It is not fully [illegible] to be consumed. Alas, [illegible] itself, [illegible] it trains its mind.

Then the father or other male relative of X.'s wife [illegible] (1) speech, exhibiting the fine of his own family in obtaining a control [illegible] one of the myths of his ancestors, and encouraging that X.'s wife is willing to [illegible] and some portion of it. This may be the [illegible] observed, for example, with the skins of a lawyer; or a [illegible] with certain figures on it, or the right to use a picture of [illegible] on the wall of his house, or an ancestral [illegible]. The speaker then recounts the whole myth before announcing which portion of it is to be used by X. on a [illegible]. It is understood that this [illegible] will be duly validated by [illegible]; presents to X. [illegible] X. gives [illegible] which. Such an [illegible]

(1) [illegible]

~~[illegible]~~

[illegible] family, the purchase of a wife from her husband. ~~[illegible]~~ Though this is known to be a fiction in origin it has extreme moral importance. [illegible] is more important in principle that even the children; in fact it is one of the essentials of legal marriage. All properties that transferred at X.'s death to the property of X. and will in time pass to his children, unless supplied by the wife's family by further purchase (~~[illegible]~~) money or goods. In this fashion elements of family myths become scattered, and one of the motivations in choosing a wife is to enlist a woman able to bring [illegible] husband's myth. The usual present is ancestral myth, that is, one henceforth used at initiations as the most distinguished of tales, to which it is important [illegible] X.'s family there [illegible] a name is said to [illegible] by a wife to her husband, and term designating the [illegible] of a [illegible] of course [illegible] family, [illegible] earthy man, [illegible] family, their ancestral song with which [illegible] "[illegible]" [illegible] of marriage [illegible]

is less objection to giving him such rights than if he were a stranger. This arrest will be described more fully in chapter VIII. "A man may receive so many prerogatives with regard to house painting that he has to continue the designs on the sides of his dwelling, or he may receive so many figures for a totem pole that he can erect one of composite pattern. X. may receive prerogatives not only from his father-in-law, but from his mother-in-law, and if he is the husband of several wives the family of each may give him something. If, for some inexplicable reason, X. is not to receive any prerogative from the family of his wife, he uses one of his own ancestral myths with the names belonging thereto. A man who gives many potlatches can validate numerous family names for himself, or he may concentrate on one alone, elevating it to a position of great importance; this also is his own affair. But any names he validates must belong to his family; it is contrary to custom for a Bella Coola to think of stealing a name to which he has no right.

At this, or some other suitable time, X. prays for assistance in the complicated rites that are to follow. Taking four pieces of pounded and dried cedar bark, and four pieces of undyed bark, he places on each a small quantity of food and throws the [illegible] into the fire. Likewise he may throw in four small pieces of any kind of goods, as he does so he prays to the supreme god:--

"[illegible] spirit (1) for the many duties which are before me."

Instead of praying himself, X. may ask a shaman to do so for him, in the belief that the latter's prayer will be more efficacious.

The necessity for supernatural assistance lies in the fact that any serious

(1) Xlemäqoa.

~~[illegible]~~

[illegible] in the [illegible] of [illegible]

[illegible]. The theory is that X. has allowed [illegible] se saok [illegible] to [illegible] unpunished. In such a case the duty of administering punishment falls upon the members of a foreign tribe. Nothing is said of the [illegible], but the ~~[illegible]~~ [illegible] with [illegible] information of what has happened. Great latitude is [illegible] to the [illegible] by the [illegible]. The [illegible] may be related ~~of [illegible] are~~ to x. and [illegible] they [illegible] to [illegible]. [illegible] of [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ~~[illegible]~~ [illegible] ~~[illegible]~~ specific could not be obtained. ~~[illegible]~~ [illegible] undoubtedly [illegible] sometimes ~~[illegible]~~ [illegible] [illegible] a year.

[illegible] the writer's [illegible] For [illegible] [illegible] the donor, ~~[illegible]~~ [illegible] that the [illegible]

~~they~~ of the whale should fall to the floor during the proceedings. This, of course, revealed to the uninitiated the mechanism of the structure. White influence on the coast prevented an incursion of foreign raiders, but, this informant firmly believes, the chiefs determined that his father should die, and they employed a magician for this purpose. It was there the father and eleven other of the family relatives died soon afterwards. My informant, the only survivor, ~~writes~~ his ~~story~~ to ~~an~~ ~~explanation~~ of Christianity.

~~Another~~ instance of the punishment which follows errors in ritual occurred a few years ago, when a number of young men used the sacrificial whistles ~~wrongly~~, ~~or~~ ~~they~~ ~~did~~ ~~not~~ ~~use~~ ~~the~~ ~~influence~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~proper~~ ~~re-~~ ~~sources~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~supernatural~~ ~~environment~~, ~~but~~ ~~they~~ ~~took~~ ~~all~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~proper~~ ~~and~~ ~~did~~. ~~We~~ ~~are~~ ~~told~~ ~~that~~ ~~many~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~young~~ ~~men~~ ~~died~~, ~~some~~ ~~probably~~ ~~they~~ ~~were~~ ~~all~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~young~~ ~~men~~ ~~who~~ ~~were~~ ~~instructing~~ ~~a~~ ~~similar~~ ~~crisis~~.

~~However~~, ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~other~~ ~~hand~~, ~~one~~ ~~has~~ ~~only~~ ~~to~~ ~~look~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~, ~~some~~ ~~people~~ ~~using~~ ~~only~~ ~~a~~ ~~few~~, ~~and~~ ~~are~~ ~~successful~~ ~~in~~ ~~life~~. ~~In~~ ~~this~~ ~~case~~ ~~it~~ ~~would~~ ~~appear~~ ~~that~~ ~~it~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~quality~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~individual~~ ~~which~~ ~~is~~ ~~important~~. If ~~one~~ can ~~use~~ ~~only~~ ~~a~~ ~~few~~ ~~things~~ ~~well~~ ~~one~~ will do ~~well~~, ~~if~~ ~~only~~ ~~a~~ ~~few~~. ~~But~~ ~~if~~ ~~one~~ ~~is~~ ~~going~~, ~~that~~ ~~is~~ ~~either~~ ~~case~~ ~~the~~ ~~whole~~ ~~environment~~ ~~all~~ ~~the~~ ~~institutions~~ ~~must~~ ~~be~~ ~~studied~~. ~~We~~ ~~are~~ ~~unable~~ ~~to~~ ~~give~~ ~~one~~ ~~any~~ ~~help~~ ~~in~~ ~~this~~ work ~~in~~ ~~another~~, ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~problem~~ ~~exists~~ ~~in~~ ~~all~~, ~~in~~ ~~another~~, ~~but~~ ~~in~~ ~~another~~ ~~one~~ ~~must~~ ~~study~~ ~~the~~ ~~whole~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~society~~, ~~or~~ ~~at~~ ~~least~~ ~~all~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~institutions~~ ~~that~~

~~Sign~~

another part of the painting of the front of the house; to another, more of the same, and so on, in like fashion, until he has allotted work for every part of the edifice. Sometimes there are peculiarities of house construction dependent upon their occurrence in the builder's ancestral myth, which are jealously guarded prerogatives. One man, for instance, enjoys the right to build five rocks above the front of his house. These represent the five peaks of Mount Shidaka, on the first mountain range to earth. Another has a series of posts to support the beams, a prerogative established by his ancestor Qéyi in the beginning of time. descriptive intimations in the world's [illegible] A [illegible] rats to represent a mythical creature. With another prerogative [illegible] of painting a glazing board, representing a [illegible], [illegible] of the house on the ground, with a representation of a mythological sea monster [illegible]. In that case the theme of the [illegible] of the house is [illegible] of the chiefs are attracted to it's [illegible], and [illegible] are irresistibly drawn to the sea monster.

Each [illegible] The above mentioned [illegible] prerogatives [illegible] alone whereas [illegible] have the right to build [illegible]. [illegible] is a recessed [illegible], about six feet [illegible], [illegible] in size [illegible] portion of the house. A platform [illegible] is built, [illegible] three feet from the bottom. [illegible] of the house itself are raised sufficiently for [illegible] from the central pit [illegible], while the [illegible] may be built. [illegible] the bottom of the pit, [illegible] feet above that is the [illegible] for the ground level is [illegible] feet above that again. [illegible] are peculiar to houses having [illegible] built [illegible], and [illegible] these trees or platforms. In those

~~Act~~

ances it appears certain that this type of construction was studied in a myth derived from Bella Bella or Rivers Inlet, there, according to the Fort Rupert informants, it was not unknown.

X. was in no hurry in choosing his women, avoiding only his own relatives and those of his wife. The question of pay is never mentioned, but it is understood that X. will recompense those who have worked for him. The scale of his fees was not strictly determined, and varied according to the circumstances. [illegible] "born in the night" him silence. ~~He~~ H[illegible]

During the time that X. is working on a mask, he is visited by [illegible] other artists with whom he discusses his work. X. has a son who is learning the craft by helping his father, and if any appear to pick secrets of his art, [illegible] given to X. who will distribute them with any other [illegible] he has engaged from whom he has received them. [illegible] will be [illegible] also helps his father by [illegible] the masks. [illegible] will [illegible] to X. but [illegible] it is stored or [illegible] the winter, not only for the [illegible] also [illegible] or relatives. As X. must give [illegible] he must [illegible] it follows that the collection of food or skins by [illegible] will [illegible] them.

The [illegible] X.'s house all day and [illegible] [illegible] all [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] number

~~5183~~

of young men carrying a large log, like a battering-ram. The majority of the bearers are ~~stanch~~ though they often obtain assistance from those who are not members of the society. The people within the house spring up to try to oject the ram, and a sham battle ensues. Backwards and forwards sway the contestants with shouting and merriment, while those who have failed to carry away their boxes of food hasten to remove them out of the danger zone. It is a time of license, and even one of the most influential chiefs may be struck by the ram or his food scattered without consideration. The ram is driven back, but those who bear it steer the log so that instead of passing out through the door it strikes the front wall, shattering some ~~of~~ of the boards with their old paintings. With a shout they drive on until part of the wall at the back of the house is likewise destroyed. Then those within the house gain the mastery and the log is carried outside, dragging its struggling bearers with it. They drop the log, and return within as if nothing untoward had occurred. This destruction of the house walls is a necessary preparation for their replacement with new paintings on new boards. When quiet has been restored a herald stands up.

"Listen!" he cries. "Ye chiefs, ye wives of chiefs and ye commoners. Soon we shall hear the supernatural beings."

Then the singers beat out the ~~song~~ tune of any Kusiut.(1) He whose song it is begins to ~~and the latter~~ dance, using the type of which he has a prerogative, but as the supernatural being with whom he has a ceremonial affinity is not present, the dance is not considered sacred. As soon as one Kusiut has finished, the tune of another is beaten,

(1) Henceforth in this monograph the term "singers" will be used as a translation of the Bella Coola word, Kusiutɛ ~~at before to fire~~ the singers

~~it [illegible] and the fire.~~ It is

~~3105~~

their duty to remember the tune and text of every song, and to beat out the air for every dancer, also to accompany him by singing the words of his song. and he too dances. The singers change from kusiut to kusiut, ~~who~~ and please themselves about the order in which they shall dance, also about how many shall perform. This continues until late ~~at~~ in the night, Then they beat out a sɪsaok tune and the member of that society to whom it belongs preforms ~~the~~ his dance, a non-sacred affair, like those of the Kusiut One after another dances as his or her tune is beaten out, until dawn approaches. Meanwhile several sɪsaok have been sent outside with a number of the large cone-shaped whistles used for a sɪsaok ceremonial. Towards dawn, sounds come from these, and sometimes a ~~heavy~~ dull thump is heard on the roof, as if a ~~being of weight~~ bears had landed there. At once there is great excitement within the house. The voices of supernatural people prov them to be at hand. No one is allowed to leave except a sɪsaok siki (1) who is skilled in dealing with Mɛtlakila (2), also called Siksiktmɛ, the supernatural being closely connected with the sɪsaok ritual. Those within can hear the voic of the siki raised as if he were speaking to some one at a distance.

(1) The accounts of all informants agree that much of the sɪsaok ritual was newly imported into Bella Coola from Bella Bella. According to some statement: Bɔtlɛs, a Bella Coola chief who died about fifty years ago, married a Bella Bel -la wife, also one from Rivers Inlet, and it was these two women who brought with them as dower certain sɪsaok prerogatives. It is said that previous to that time the Bella Coola did not understand the use of the large cone-shaped whistles, ~~and merely beat time with sticks for music~~. Nor were they able to

(2). Knowledge of this being is said to have been acquired by the marriage of a certain Smaoɔn of Kimsquit to a Bella Bella woman in the beginning of time.

(continued from last note)

~~5134~~

summon the supernatural beings to the youths secluded in the back room, nor to dispel the beings at the conclusion of the rites. On the other hand some Bella Coola claim that their first ancestors brought the whistles with them from the land above. It is probable that the calling in of the supernatural beings is a ~~new part of~~ recent addition to the potlatch, which accounts for the contradictory accounts, but whether or not the whistles are a new feature is more doubtful. It appears certain that the prerogative of siki has recently been obtained from the Bella Bella. Siki means "the one who cures", and the name is given to the man whose prerogative it is to tend the Kusiut initiates in whom supernatural powers are located. In Bella Bella there is a similar functionary for sisaok matters, known as a hai'ɬakila. Through intermarriage several Bella Coola have recently obtained this prerogative; in each case it is frankly stated that it has been derived from the Bella Bella. The Bella Coola apply to these, so favoured, the term siki, as they do for the kusiut "curer", though the Bella Bella name, hai'ɬakila is used with equal frequency. The present siki have endeavoured to claim for themselves certain ceremonial functions formerly carried out by any sisaok. In this account of a potlatch it is assumed that a siki is functioning on all occasions, but frequently any senior sisaok is considered sufficiently close to the supernatural beings to act satisfactorily. Until fifty years ago it is clear that any sisaok was considered capable of doing so.

"Chief you have come too early. The house is not yet ready. Please return later."

He is answered by loud whistling, which grows fainter, as if the being who